

AUSSIES VOTE FOR BEST HOLIDAY SPOTS

A hideaway cottage on the Gold Coast with capacity for only three couples, and an island paradise in the Indian Ocean, are among a string of winners in the inaugural Holidays For Couples magazine readers choice awards.

The poll revealed that Australian holidaymakers prefer five-star luxury properties, short breaks, and weekends away.

The stylish Holidays for Couples magazine, which sells throughout Australia, the Pacific and Asia, asked readers to vote for their favourite places in four categories.

These comprised: most popular hotel/resort (in Australia and four areas overseas), most popular city hotel, most popular resort spa, and most popular romantic weekend retreats (Australia).

The Gold Coast's Bauhinia Cottage in the Tallebudgera Valley, 15 minutes west of Burleigh Heads, won the award for the most popular romantic weekend retreat (Queensland). The Hilton Maldives won the gold award for the most popular hotel /resort in the Indian Ocean. The silver award in the Indian Ocean category went to the Soneva Gili Resort and Spa in the Maldives, which also won a silver medal in the most popular resort spa category.

Other Gold Award winners were Iririki Island Resort Vanuatu, **Alam Kul Kul in Bali**, Hayman in the Whitsundays, Huka Lodge Taupo, New Zealand, the Shangri-La Hotel Sydney, and Daydream Island Resort.

Silver awards went to the Shangri-La Fijian Resort, Shangri-La Rasa Ria Resort Malaysia, the Tuscany Wine Estate Hunter Valley and the Tauhara Sunrise Resort New Zealand.

The Rustic Spirit in the Blue Mountains won the romantic weekend retreat award for New South Wales, Boroka Downs (Victoria), Cradle Mountain Lodge (Tasmania) Harmony Forest (Margaret River, Western Australia), Crocodile Hotel Kakadu (Northern Territory). In South Australia there was a three-way tie : Mt Bold Estate, Burdett's Retreat, and St Githas Cottage.



The publishers of Holidays For Couples, Rhonda Bannister and Tanya Joslin, said that the awards - the first in Australia by a consumer travel magazine - attracted an overwhelming response from both the public and travel industry.

"Based, as they are, entirely on the personal experiences of readers, the awards truly reflect public opinion", they said.

A complete list of winners (five in each category) is available at www.holidaysforcouples.com.au Voting for the 2005 awards (on the same website) opens after January 15. Full details will also be in the April 2005 issue of Holidays for Couples.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

Rhonda Bannister

P: 1800 077 041

E: rhonda@graphicpublishing.com.au

Tanya Joslin

P: 0404 018 274

E: tanya@holidaysforcouples.com.au

Released by Glyn May (as a courtesy).

Moblie: 0418 730 686

Tanya Bannister-Joslin

Director of Editorial

Mobile: 0404 018 274 (best number)

Head Office Toll Free: 1800 077 041